

**TRIPLE-BAND DIPOLE ANTENNA WITH ARTIFICIAL MAGNETIC
CONDUCTOR FOR RADIO FREQUENCY IDENTIFICATION**

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TRIPLE-BAND DIPOLE ANTENNA WITH ARTIFICIAL MAGNETIC
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*Specially dedicated to my beloved husband, Musa Abdullah and my children;
Muhammad Hakim, Adam Fakhri, Izzat Ibrahim, Sayyidah Akma and Akma Huda
for their love*

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ABSTRACT

The radiation characteristics and input impedance of the dipole antenna will be distorted when the antenna is placed on a metal object. The electromagnetic wave of the antenna is reflected almost entirely by the metallic surface and a 180° phase shift is occurred. In addition, a common dipole antenna has low gain which is about 2.15 dBi. Owing to the high impedance, surface structure called Artificial Magnetic Conductor (AMC) is developed as a ground plane for the dipole antenna to prevent the performance degradation of the antenna caused by metallic objects and to increase the antenna's gain. Due to the reflected wave of the AMC is in-phase with the antenna current (reflection phase equals to zero), it improves the radiation efficiency and subsequently enhances the gain of the dipole antenna. Thus, due to the great demand in multiband antenna, this research has developed a triple-band dipole antenna with straight and meander structures at Ultra-high Frequency (UHF) and Microwave Frequency (MWF) Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) frequencies; 0.92 GHz, 2.45 GHz and 5.8 GHz respectively. Firstly, the single-band square-patches AMCs are investigated. Then, to obtain a smaller structure of AMC and suitable for RFID applications, two new structures of AMC-HIS are developed. They are single-band AMC called zigzag dipole and dual-band AMC called rectangular-patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot. The parameters that affect the AMC performance are discussed and the performances of the antenna with and without the AMC GP are investigated in terms of return loss, total gain, total efficiency and directivity. From the results gained, in general the power received of the dipole antenna with AMC GP is higher than the power received of the dipole antenna with the absent of AMC GP. Furthermore, a longer reading distance is recorded for the dipole tag antenna backed by AMC structures. For instance, the reading distance for the UHF meandered dipole tag antenna with the 2x2 rectangular-patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot has achieved two times higher compared with the dipole antenna without the AMC GP. While at MWF, its reading distance is increased from 0.8 m to 1.25 m. The performance of the dipole tag antenna with AMC GP attached to the metallic plate size is also tested to verify the dipole tag antenna with AMC GP can be used for metallic object detection in RFID applications.

ABSTRAK

Ciri-ciri radiasi dan galangan masukan antenna dwikutub akan terganggu apabila ia diletakkan ke atas objek logam. Ini kerana, hampir keseluruhan gelombang elektromagnetnya akan dipantulkan oleh permukaan logam dan berlaku anjakan fasa sebanyak 180° . Tambahan lagi, antenna dwikutub biasanya mempunyai gandaan yang rendah di mana nilainya sekitar 2.15 dBi. Oleh itu, struktur permukaan galangan tinggi yang dikenali sebagai Konduktor Bermagnet Buatan (AMC) telah dibangunkan sebagai satah bumi kepada antenna dwikutub untuk menghalang kemerosotan prestasi antenna yang disebabkan oleh objek logam dan untuk meningkatkan gandaan antenna. Disebabkan gelombang pantulan bagi AMC adalah sama fasa dengan arus antenna (fasa pantulan bersamaan sifar), ia meningkatkan kecekapan radiasi dan seterusnya meningkatkan gandaan antenna. Maka sehubungan dengan permintaan yang tinggi dalam antenna pelbagai jalur, penyelidikan ini telah membangunkan antenna dwikutub tiga-jalur yang mempunyai struktur yang lurus dan berkelok pada frekuensi amat-tinggi (UHF) dan pada frekuensi gelombang mikro (MWF) frekuensi Pengenalan Frekuensi Radio (RFID); 0.92 GHz, 2.45 GHz dan 5.8 GHz. Mulanya, segiempat sama-tampal jalur-tunggal AMC dikaji. Kemudian, untuk mendapatkan struktur AMC-HIS yang lebih kecil dan sesuai untuk aplikasi RFID, dua struktur baru AMC-HIS telah dibangunkan. Ia adalah jalur-tunggal AMC yang dipanggil dwikutub zigzag dan dwi-jalur AMC yang dipanggil segiempat-tampal dengan alur segiempat dan bentuk-I. Parameter-parameter yang memberi kesan ke atas prestasi AMC dibincangkan dan prestasi antenna dengan satah bumi AMC dan tanpa satah bumi AMC dikaji dari segi kehilangan balikan, gandaan keseluruhan, kecekapan keseluruhan dan penumpuan. Daripada keputusan yang diperolehi, secara keseluruhannya penerimaan kuasa oleh antenna dwikutub dengan satah bumi AMC mempunyai penerimaan kuasa yang lebih tinggi berbanding antenna dwikutub yang tidak mempunyai satah bumi AMC. Selain daripada itu, jarak bacaan yang lebih panjang telah direkodkan bagi antenna label dwikutub yang dibelakangi oleh struktur AMC. Sebagai contoh, jarak bacaan bagi antenna label UHF dwikutub dengan Konduktor Bermagnet Buatan segiempat-tampal dengan alur segiempat dan bentuk-I 2x2 telah mencapai dua kali ganda berbanding antenna dwikutub tanpa satah bumi AMC. Manakala pada MWF, jarak bacaannya telah meningkat dari 0.8 m kepada 1.25 m. Prestasi antenna dwikutub dengan satah bumi AMC juga telah diuji di mana ia telah diletakkan ke atas kepingan logam untuk mengesahkan bahawa antenna label dengan satah bumi AMC boleh digunakan untuk mengesan objek logam di dalam aplikasi RFID.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

CHAPTER	TITLE	PAGE
	DECLARATION	ii
	DEDICATION	iii
	ACKNOWLEDGMENT	iv
	ABSTRACT	v
	ABSTRAK	vi
	TABLE OF CONTENTS	vii
	LIST OF TABLES	xii
	LIST OF FIGURES	xvii
	LIST OF SYMBOLS	xxix
	LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS	xxxix
	LIST OF APPENDICES	xxxix
1	INTRODUCTION	1
	1.0 Research Background	1
	1.1 Research Benefits/ Applications	3
	1.2 Problem Statements	3
	1.3 Research Objectives	4
	1.4 Scope of Research and Limitations	5
	1.5 Thesis Organisation	6

2	LITERATURE REVIEW	8
2.0	Introduction	8
2.1	Multiband Printed Antenna	8
2.1.1	Patch Antenna	9
2.1.2	Planar-inverted-F antenna (PIFA)	11
2.1.3	Printed Dipole Antenna	12
2.1.4	Printed Monopole Antenna	14
2.2	Artificial Magnetic Conductor (AMC)	22
2.2.1	High Impedance Surface (HIS)	22
2.2.2	Properties of the High Impedance Surface	24
2.2.3	Reflection Phase	27
2.2.4	Single-band, Multi-band and Wide-band AMC	30
2.2.5	The Applications of the AMC	42
2.3	Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) System	44
2.3.1	RFID Basic Components and Operating Principles	45
2.3.2	RFID Frequencies	46
2.3.3	Radio Link	47
2.3.4	Design Consideration for RFID Tag Antennas	48
2.3.5	Effect of Metallic Material on Dipole Tag Antenna	49
2.3.6	RFID Tag Designs for Metallic Object Identification	50
2.4	Chapter summary	59
3	TRIPLE-BAND PRINTED DIPOLE ANTENNA	60
3.0	Introduction	60
3.1	The Effects of Metallic Plate on a 920MHz Wire Dipole Antenna	60
3.2	The Development Process of the Printed Dipole	

	Antenna	62
3.3	Initial Design	65
3.4	Triple-band Printed Straight Dipole Antenna	67
3.5	Triple-band Printed Meandered Dipole Antenna	72
3.6	Comparison between Simulation and Measurement Results	77
3.7	Reading Distance Measurement	81
3.8	Chapter Summary	84
4	SINGLE-BAND AND DUAL-BAND AMC-HIS	85
4.0	Introduction	85
4.1	Artificial Magnetic Conductor Design Process	85
4.2	Single-band Square-patch Artificial Magnetic Conductors	88
4.2.1	Square-patch AMC-HIS Design at 0.92GHz	90
4.2.2	Square-patch AMC-HIS Design at 2.45GHz	91
4.2.3	Square-patch AMC-HIS Design at 5.8GHz	92
4.2.4	Square-patch AMC-HIS Parametric Study	94
4.3	Zigzag Dipole Artificial Magnetic Conductor	96
4.3.1	Straight Dipole AMC Design at 0.92GHz	97
4.3.2	Zigzag Dipole AMC Design at 0.92GHz	98
4.4	Dual-band Artificial Magnetic Conductors	100
4.4.1	The Rectangular Patch with the Rectangular Slot AMC-HIS Design at 0.92GHz and 2.45GHz	100
4.4.2	The Rectangular Patch with the Rectangular Slot AMC-HIS Parametric Study	103
4.4.3	The Rectangular Patch with the Slotted Rectangular and I-shaped Slot AMC-HIS Design at 0.92GHz and 2.45GHz	106
4.4.4	The Rectangular Patch with the Slotted Rectangular and I-shaped Slot AMC-HIS	

	Parametric Study	108
4.4.5	The Square Patch with the Square Slot AMC-HIS Design at 2.45GHz and 5.8GHz	110
4.4.6	The Square Patch with the Square Slot AMC-HIS Parametric Study	112
4.5	Chapter summary	116
5	TRIPLE-BAND PRINTED DIPOLE ANTENNA WITH ARTIFICIAL MAGNETIC CONDUCTOR GROUND PLANE	117
5.0.	Introduction	117
5.1	The Development Process of the Artificial Magnetic Conductor as a Ground Plane for the Printed Dipole Antenna	118
5.2	Simulation and Measurement of the Triple-band Straight Dipole Antenna with the Single-band AMC-HIS GP	121
5.2.1	The Triple-band Straight Dipole Antenna with the 0.92GHz Square-patch AMC-HIS GP	122
5.2.2	The Triple-band Straight Dipole Antenna with the 2.45GHz Square-patch AMC-HIS GP	126
5.2.3	The Triple-band Straight Dipole Antenna with the 5.8GHz Square-patch AMC-HIS GP	131
5.3	Simulation and Measurement of the Triple-band Meandered Dipole Antenna with the Single-band AMC-HIS GP	134
5.3.1	The Triple-band Meandered Dipole Antenna with the 0.92GHz Square-patch AMC-HIS GP	134

5.3.2	The Triple-band Meandered Dipole Antenna with the 2.45GHz Square-patch AMC-HIS GP	140
5.3.3	The Triple-band Meandered Dipole Antenna with the 5.8GHz Square-patch AMC-HIS GP	143
5.3.4	The Triple-band Meandered Dipole Antenna with the 0.92GHz Zigzag Dipole AMC-HIS GP	146
5.4	Simulation and Measurement of the Triple-band Meandered Dipole Antenna with the Dual-band AMC-HIS GP	150
5.4.1	The Triple-band Meandered Dipole Antenna with the Rectangular Patch with Rectangular Slot AMC-HIS GP	150
5.4.2	The Triple-band Meandered Dipole Antenna with the Rectangular Patch with Slotted Rectangular and I-shaped Slot AMC-HIS GP	157
5.4.3	The Triple-band Meandered Dipole Antenna with the Square Patch with Square Slot AMC-HIS GP	166
5.5	Chapter summary	169
6	CONCLUSION	171
6.0	Overall Conclusion	171
6.1	Key Contributions	173
6.2	Future Research	175
	REFERENCES	177
	Appendices A-G	186-215

LIST OF TABLES

TABLE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Previous researches on multi-band printed antenna	18
2.2	Previous researches on Artificial Magnetic Conductor	38
2.3	RFID frequencies [71]	46
2.4	The read range comparison between the regular patch antenna, patch antenna with EBG ground plane and PIFA with and without metallic plate	54
2.5	Previous researches on tag antenna for metallic objects identification	56
3.1	Technical descriptions and dimensions of the triple-band printed straight dipole antenna	68
3.2	The performances of the triple-band straight dipole antenna at 0.92GHz, 2.45GHz and 5.8GHz	71
3.3	Technical descriptions and dimensions of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna	73
3.4	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna at 0.92GHz, 2.45GHz and 5.8GHz	75
3.5	The calculated and measured reading distance for both triple-band dipole antennas at 0.92GHz	83
3.6	The calculated and measured reading distance for both triple-band dipole antennas at 2.45GHz	83
4.1	The resonant frequency and bandwidth of the	

	rectangular patch, rectangular patch with rectangular slot and rectangular patch with rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC	108
5.1	The performances of the triple-band straight dipole antenna at 0.92GHz	123
5.2	The performances of the triple-band straight dipole antenna at 2.45GHz	127
5.3	The maximum measured reading distance of the 2.45GHz straight dipole tag antenna	128
5.4	The performances of the triple-band straight dipole antenna studied in Figure 5.11 at 2.45GHz	130
5.5	The performances of the triple-band straight dipole antenna at 5.8GHz	132
5.6	The simulated and measured return loss of the triple-band straight dipole antenna with and without 5.8GHz square-patch AMC-HIS GP	133
5.7	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna at 0.92GHz	137
5.8	The maximum measured reading distance of the 0.92GHz straight dipole tag antenna	139
5.9	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna at 2.45GHz	141
5.10	The maximum measured reading distance of the 2.45GHz straight dipole tag antenna	143
5.11	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna at 5.8GHz	144
5.12	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without the zigzag dipole AMC structures	147
5.13	The simulated and measured results of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with 2x2 and 4x2 0.92GHz zigzag dipole AMC-HIS GP	148

5.14	The measured reading distance of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without the 2x2 and 4x2 0.92GHz zigzag dipole AMC-HIS GP	148
5.15	The comparison of prototype size and measured reading distance of the UHF meandered dipole tag antenna with and without the 0.92GHz AMC-HIS GPs	149
5.16	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without the rectangular-patch with rectangular slot AMC structures at 0.92GHz	151
5.17	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without the rectangular-patch with rectangular slot AMC structures at 2.45GHz	152
5.18	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with 2x1 rectangular-patch with rectangular slot AMC GP attached to metal plates at 0.92GHz	153
5.19	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with the 2x1 rectangular-patch with rectangular slot AMC GP attached to metal plates at 2.45GHz	153
5.20	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with the 2x2 rectangular-patch with rectangular slot AMC GP attached to metal plates at 0.92GHz	154
5.21	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with the 2x2 rectangular-patch with rectangular slot AMC GP attached to metal plates at 2.45GHz	154
5.22	The measured reading distance of 0.92GHz meandered dipole tag antenna with and without the 2x1 and 2x2 rectangular-patch with rectangular slot	

	AMC-HIS GP using the UHF RFID Gen2 reader module	155
5.23	The measured reading distance of 2.45GHz meandered dipole tag antenna with and without the 2x1 and 2x2 rectangular-patch with rectangular slot AMC-HIS GP using microwave 2.45GHz RFID reader	155
5.24	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without the rectangular-patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC structures at 0.92GHz	157
5.25	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without the rectangular-patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC structures at 2.45GHz	157
5.26	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with 2x1 rectangular-patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC GP attached to metal plates at 0.92GHz	161
5.27	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with 2x1 rectangular-patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC GP attached to metal plates at 2.45GHz	162
5.28	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with 2x2 rectangular-patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC GP attached to metal plates at 0.92GHz	162
5.29	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with 2x2 rectangular-patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC GP attached to metal plates at 2.45GHz	162
5.30	The measured reading distance of 0.92GHz	163

	meandered dipole tag antenna with and without the 2x1 and 2x2 rectangular-patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC-HIS GP using UHF RFID Gen2 reader module	
5.31	The measured reading distance of 2.45GHz meandered dipole tag antenna with and without the 2x1 and 2x2 rectangular-patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC-HIS GP using microwave 2.45GHz RFID reader	164
5.32	The comparisons of measured reading distance and prototype size of the UHF meandered dipole tag antenna with the dual-band AMC GPs	165
5.33	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without the square-patch with square slot AMC structure at 2.45GHz	166
5.34	The performances of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without the square-patch with square slot AMC structure at 5.8GHz	167

LIST OF FIGURES

FIGURE NO.	TITLE	PAGE
2.1	Compact wideband staked patch antenna (reprinted from [21])	10
2.2	Notched antenna with triangular tapered feed lines (reprinted from [24])	24
2.3	A planar triple-band PIFA (reprinted from [27])	12
2.4	The graph of S11 of the designed PIFA (reprinted from [27])	12
2.5	Multiband printed dipole antenna (reprinted from [29])	13
2.6	Triple-band omni-directional dipole antenna (reprinted from [30])	14
2.7	Printed multi-branch monopole antenna (reprinted from [33])	16
2.8	The simulated and measured return loss of the printed multi-branch monopole antenna (reprinted from [33])	16
2.9	Printed double-T monopole antenna (reprinted from [24])	17
2.10	Typical high-impedance surface: (a) cross-sectional view and (b) front view (reprinted from [39])	23
2.11	Lumped Element Equivalent Circuit of the HIS	23
2.12	A wire current on top of a PEC and AMC surface	25
2.13	Radiation patterns of a horizontal wire antenna: (a)	25

	H-plane and (b) E-plane (reprinted from [34])	
2.14	The effect of suppressing the surface waves (reprinted from [34])	26
2.15	Measured radiation pattern of a vertical monopole antenna: (a) on a metal ground plane (PEC) and b) on a high-impedance ground plane (reprinted from [34])	27
2.16	Typical simulation setup for determining the phase reflection graph	28
2.17	A graph of reflection phase	28
2.18	Reflection phase measurement setup using two horn antennas (reprinted from [34])	29
2.19	Reflection phase measurement setup using a horn antenna (reprinted from [52])	30
2.20	Single-band AMC-HIS structures: (a) mushroom-like EBG, (b) uni-planar compact EBG, (c) Peano curve of order 1 and (d) Hilbert curve of order 2 (reprinted from [53])	31
2.21	Single-band AMC-HIS structures: (a) square patch and (b) square loop FSS (reprinted from [55])	32
2.22	Dual-band AMC-HIS structure (reprinted from [60])	33
2.23	Triple-band printed dipole AMC (reprinted from [61])	34
2.24	Triple-band uni-planar compact AMC: (a) unit cell and (b) reflection phase (reprinted from [60])	34
2.25	Fractalized uni-planar compact AMC studied in Figure 2.24: (a) unit cell and (b) reflection phase (reprinted from [60])	35
2.26	Wideband AMC with different slot dimensions (reprinted from [6]2)	36
2.27	Measurement and simulation comparison of a uniform FSS array with slot dimensions $1076 \times 400 \mu\text{m}$: (a) amplitude and (b) phase (reprinted from [62])	36

2.28	Measurement and simulation comparison of FSS array with different slot dimensions: (a) amplitude and (b) phase (reprinted from [62])	36
2.29	Wideband AMC composed of (a) L-shaped unclosed rectangular loop and (b) cross with a slot at the centre (reprinted from [63])	37
2.30	A unit cell of wideband AMC consists of L-shaped unclosed rectangular loop and cross with a slot at the centre (reprinted from [63])	37
2.31	Horizontal wire antenna on AMC ground plane (reprinted from [53])	42
2.32	Probe fed patch antenna with surrounded high impedance surface: (a) antenna configuration and (b) side view (reprinted from [65])	43
2.33	a) Side view of the rectangular microstrip patch antenna, (b) Top view of the rectangular microstrip patch antenna with 5x2 AMC ground plane and (c) Top view of the rectangular microstrip patch antenna with 5x3 AMC ground plane (reprinted from [66])	44
2.34	The RFID system and its basic components and operating principles (reprinted from [71])	45
2.35	Ceramic patch antenna for passive UHF RFID tag mountable on metallic objects: (a) antenna's structure and (b) antenna's radiation pattern (reprinted from [12])	51
2.36	The designed of PIFA tag antenna mounted on metallic objects: (a) perspective view and (b) front view of the feeding layer (reprinted from [16])	52
2.37	Passive UHF RFID tag for metallic object identification: (a) patch antenna with EBG and (b) printed IFA (reprinted from [3])	53
2.38	The invented UHF dipole tag antenna with 4x2 rectangular-patches AMC (reprinted from [79])	55

3.1	Wire dipole antenna design at 920MHz: (a) design structure, input return loss and (c) radiation pattern	61
3.2	The flowchart of the development of triple-band printed dipole antenna	64
3.3	The designed triple-band monopole antenna	65
3.4	The optimized return loss of the triple-band monopole antenna	66
3.5	The simulated return loss for three different value of the hg ($ht = 45\text{mm}$)	67
3.6	Triple-band printed straight dipole antenna: (a) the design structure and (b) the surface current at 0.92GHz	68
3.7	The simulated return loss of triple-band printed straight dipole antenna	69
3.8	The optimized simulated input impedance of triple-band printed straight dipole antenna	69
3.9	The simulated far field of the triple-band printed straight dipole antenna at: (a) 0.92GHz, (b) 2.45GHz and (c) 5.8GHz	70
3.10	The simulated return loss with different values of l_b for triple-band straight dipole antenna	71
3.11	The simulated return loss with different values of br for triple-band straight dipole antenna	72
3.12	Triple-band meandered dipole antenna: (a) the design structure and (b) surface current at 0.92GHz	73
3.13	The simulated return loss of triple-band printed meandered dipole antenna	74
3.14	The optimized simulated input impedance of triple-band printed meandered dipole antenna	74
3.15	The simulated far field of the triple-band printed meandered dipole antenna at: (a) 0.92GHz, (b) 2.45GHz and (c) 5.8GHz	75
3.16	The simulated return loss with different values of l_b	76

	for meandered dipole antenna	
3.17	The simulated return loss with different values of br for meandered dipole antenna	76
3.18	The fabricated triple-band (a) straight and (b) meandered dipole antennas	77
3.19	The simulated and measured input return loss of triple-band (a) straight and (b) meandered dipole antennas	78
3.20	The simulated and measured gain of triple-band (a) straight and (b) meandered dipole antennas	79
3.21	The simulated and measured radiation patterns of triple-band (a) straight and (b) meandered dipole antennas at 0.92GHz, 2.45 GHz and 5.8GHz	81
3.22	The fabricated passive UHF triple-band (a) straight and (b) meandered dipole tag antennas	82
3.23	The layout of the RFID tag range measurement in a free space	82
4.1	The design steps for the single-band and dual-band AMC-HIS	87
4.2	The simulation set-up to obtain the (a) reflection phase diagram and (b) reflection magnitude and surface impedance of the AMC structure	89
4.3	The unit cell and reflection phase of the 0.92GHz square-patch AMC-HIS	90
4.4	The reflection magnitude of the 0.92GHz square-patch AMC-HIS	90
4.5	The surface impedance of the 0.92GHz square-patch AMC-HIS	91
4.6	The unit cell and reflection phase of the 2.45GHz square-patch AMC-HIS	91
4.7	The reflection magnitude of the 2.45GHz square-patch AMC-HIS	92
4.8	The surface impedance of the 2.45GHz square-patch	

	AMC-HIS	92
4.9	The unit cell and reflection phase of the 5.8GHz square-patch AMC-HIS	93
4.10	The reflection magnitude of the 5.8GHz square-patch AMC-HIS	93
4.11	The surface impedance of the 5.8GHz square-patch AMC-HIS	93
4.12	The reflection graph when: (a) gap size, (b) patch size, (c) substrate permittivity and (d) substrate thickness of unit cell of the square-patch AMC-HIS is varied	95
4.13	The effect of: (a) gap size, (b) patch size, (c) substrate permittivity and (d) substrate thickness on resonant frequency and bandwidth of the square-patch AMC-HIS	96
4.14	A straight dipole AMC-HIS design at 0.92GHz	97
4.15	The unit cell and reflection phase of the 0.92GHz straight dipole AMC-HIS	97
4.16	The reflection magnitude of the 0.92GHz straight dipole AMC-HIS	98
4.17	The surface impedance of the 0.92GHz straight dipole AMC-HIS	98
4.18	The zigzag dipole AMC-HIS design at 0.92GHz	99
4.19	The reflection magnitude of the 0.92GHz zigzag dipole AMC-HIS	99
4.20	The surface impedance of the 0.92GHz zigzag dipole AMC-HIS	99
4.21	The reflection phase of the 0.92GHz zigzag dipole and square-patch AMC-HIS	100
4.22	A unit cell and reflection phase of the rectangular patch with the rectangular slot AMC design at 0.92GHz and 2.45GHz	101
4.23	The reflection magnitude of the rectangular patch	

	with the rectangular slot AMC–HIS	102
4.24	The surface impedance of the rectangular patch with the rectangular slot AMC–HIS at the (a) lower and (b) upper band	102
4.25	The graph of the reflection phase with different main rectangular-patch (a) length ($lp1$) and (b) width ($wp1$)	103
4.26	Graph of the reflection phase with different second rectangular-patch (a) length ($lp2$) and width ($wp2$)	104
4.27	Graph of the reflection phase with different slot widths (ws)	104
4.28	Graph of the reflection phase with different gap sizes (g_x)	105
4.29	Graph of the reflection phase with different gap sizes (g_y)	105
4.30	A unit cell and reflection phase of the rectangular patch with the slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC design at 0.92GHz and 2.45GHz	106
4.31	The reflection magnitude of the rectangular patch with the slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC design at 0.92GHz and 2.45GHz	107
4.32	The surface impedance of the rectangular patch with the slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC–HIS at the (a) lower and (b) upper band	107
4.33	The reflection phase of the rectangular patch, the rectangular patch with rectangular slot and rectangular patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC	109
4.34	The parameters that influence the lower and upper AMC frequencies of the rectangular patch with the slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC	110
4.35	A unit cell and reflection phase of the square patch with the square slot AMC design at 2.45GHz and 5.8GHz	111

4.36	The reflection magnitude of the square patch with the square slot AMC design at 2.45GHz and 5.8GHz	111
4.37	The surface impedance of the square patch with the square slot AMC-HIS at the: (a) lower and (b) upper band	111
4.38	Reflection phase of the dual-band square patch with the square slot AMC with different: (a) substrate permittivity and (b) substrate thickness	112
4.39	Reflection phase of the dual-band square patch with the square slot AMC with different: (a) slot width and (b) gap between the lattices	113
4.40	Reflection phase of the dual-band square patch with the square slot AMC with different: (a) outer patch size and (b) inner patch size	114
4.41	The frequencies of the AMC structure as functions of the: (a) substrate permittivity, (b) substrate thickness, (c) slot width and (d) gap between the lattices, (e) outer patch size and (f) inner patch size	115
5.1	The structure of the dipole antenna with AMC-HIS GP	117
5.2	The development steps of the single-band and dual-band AMCs as a ground plane for the printed dipole antenna	120
5.3	A part of the fabricated dipole antenna, tag, single-band and dual-band AMCs and its casing	121
5.4	Triple-band straight dipole antenna incorporated with 2x1 0.92GHz square-patch AMC-HIS structure	122
5.5	The input return loss of the triple-band straight dipole antenna with and without the 0.92GHz square-patch AMC-HIS GP and dipole antenna with PEC GP	124
5.6	The radiation pattern of the triple-band straight dipole antenna with and without the 0.92GHz square-patch AMC GP and dipole antenna with PEC GP at	

	0.92GHz	124
5.7	The measured power received by the straight dipole antenna with and without the 0.92GHz square-patch AMC GP	125
5.8	UHF straight dipole tag antenna with the 0.92GHz square-patch AMC GP	126
5.9	The triple-band straight dipole antenna incorporated with the 6x1 2.45GHz square-patch AMC-HIS structure	126
5.10	The measured power received by the straight dipole antenna with and without the 2.45GHz square-patch AMC GP	128
5.11	The positions of the antenna studied	129
5.12	The radiation pattern of the triple-band printed straight dipole antenna, antenna with the PEC GP, antenna with the 6x2 2.45GHz AMC GP and antenna with 6x2 2.45GHz AMC GP attached to 250mm x 250mm metal plate	131
5.13	The triple-band straight dipole antenna incorporated with the 16x1 5.8GHz square-patch AMC GP	132
5.14	The simulated realized gain of the straight dipole antenna with and without the 5.8GHz square-patch AMC GP	133
5.15	The measured power received by the straight dipole antenna with and without the 5.8GHz square-patch AMC GP	134
5.16	The triple-band meandered dipole antenna with the 2x1 0.92GHz square-patch AMC GP	135
5.17	The input return loss of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without 0.92GHz square-patch AMC-HIS GP and dipole antenna with PEC GP	136
5.18	The radiation pattern of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without the 0.92GHz square-	

	patch AMC GP and dipole antenna with the PEC GP	136
5.19	The far-field of the: (a) dipole antenna, (b) dipole antenna with the 0.92GHz square-patch AMC-HIS GP (c) dipole antenna with the PEC GP (d) dipole antenna with the 0.92GHz square-patch AMC-HIS GP attached to 250mm x 250mm metal plate and (e) dipole antenna with the 0.92GHz square-patch AMC-HIS GP attached to 500mm x 500mm metal plate at 0.92GHz	138
5.20	The 0.92GHz meandered dipole tag antenna with the 0.92GHz square-patch AMC GP	139
5.21	The measured power received by the meandered dipole antenna with and without the 0.92GHz square-patch AMC-HIS GP	140
5.22	The triple-band meandered dipole antenna with 5x1 2.45GHz square-patch AMC-HIS GP	141
5.23	The simulated realized gain of the meandered dipole antenna with and without the 2.45GHz square-patch AMC-HIS GP	142
5.24	The measured power received by the meandered dipole antenna with and without the 2.45GHz square-patch AMC-HIS GP	143
5.25	The triple-band meandered dipole antenna incorporated with the 10x1 5.8GHz square-patch AMC-HIS GP	144
5.26	The simulated realized gain of the meandered dipole antenna with and without the 5.8GHz square-patch AMC-HIS GP	145
5.27	The measured power received by the meandered dipole antenna with and without the 5.8GHz square-patch AMC-HIS GP	146
5.28	The triple-band meandered dipole antenna incorporated with: (a) 2x2 and (b) 4x2 0.92GHz	147

5.29	The measured power received by the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without the 0.92GHz AMC ground planes	149
5.30	The triple-band meandered dipole antenna incorporated with: (a) 2x1 and (b) 2x2 rectangular-patch with rectangular slot AMC	150
5.31	The measured power received by the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without the AMC GPs at the (a) first and (b) second band of dipole antenna	152
5.32	The triple-band meandered dipole antenna incorporated with: (a) 2x1 and (b) 2x2 rectangular-patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC	156
5.33	The Cartesian plot of the meandered dipole antenna at 0.92GHz	158
5.34	The Cartesian plot of the meandered dipole antenna at 2.45GHz	159
5.35	The measured return loss of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with the 2x1 and 2x2 rectangular-patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC ground planes	160
5.36	The measured power received by the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without AMC GPs at the first band of the dipole antenna	160
5.37	The measured power received by the triple-band meandered dipole antenna with and without AMC GPs at the second band of the dipole antenna	161
5.38	The triple-band meandered tag dipole antenna incorporated with the dual-band 2x2 rectangular-patch with slotted rectangular and I-shaped slot AMC attached to 250mm x 250mm metal plate	163
5.39	The triple-band meandered dipole antenna incorporated with the 4x1 square-patch with square	

	slot AMC and 250mm x 250mm metallic plate	168
5.40	The far-field of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna incorporated with the 4x1 square-patch with square slot AMC and 250mm x 250mm metallic plate at 2.45GHz	168
5.41	The far-field of the triple-band meandered dipole antenna incorporated with the 4x1 square-patch with square slot AMC and 250mm x 250mm metallic plate at 5.8GHz	169

LIST OF SYMBOLS

Z_s	-	Surface impedance
ϵ_r	-	Substrate permittivity
h	-	Substrate thickness
δ	-	Tangent loss
d	-	Separation distance between dipole antenna and metal surface
λ	-	Operating wavelength
Z_0	-	Characteristic impedance
ϵ_{eff}	-	Effective dielectric constant
hg	-	Height of the ground plane
ht	-	Distance between the ground plane and the branches
l_b	-	Length between the port and branch dipole elements
b_r	-	Length of the branch dipole
$P_{tag-chip}$	-	Tag power
R	-	Reading distance
$P_{reader-tx}$	-	Reader output power
$G_{reader-ant}$	-	Reader antenna gain
$G_{tag-ant}$	-	Tag antenna gain
χ	-	Mismatch polarization coefficient
$P_{tag-threshold}$	-	Threshold power
τ	-	Power transmission coefficient
Γ	-	Reflection coefficient
$G_{realized}$	-	Realized gain
μ_{total}	-	Total radiation efficiency

D	- Directivity
f_r	- Operating frequency
L	- Inductance
C	- Capacitance
W	- Patch width
g	- Gap between the patches
f_U	- Upper frequency
f_L	- Lower frequency
ε_0	- Free-space permittivity
μ_0	- Free-space permeability
η_0	- Free-space impedance
λ_0	- Free-space wavelength
λ_g	- Guided wavelength

LIST OF ABBREVIATIONS

HIS	-	High Impedance Surface
AMC	-	Artificial Magnetic Conductor
UHF	-	Ultra-high Frequency
MWF	-	Microwave Frequency
GP	-	Ground Plane
RFID	-	Radio Frequency Identification
ASIC	-	Application Specific Integrated Circuit
RF	-	Radio Frequency
PMC	-	Perfect Magnetic Conductor
PEC	-	Perfect Electric Conductor
CST	-	Computer Simulation Technology
PIFA	-	Planar Inverted-F Antenna
CAD	-	Computer Aided Design
FSS	-	Frequency Selective Surface
FR-4	-	Flame Retardant-4
SMA	-	Sub Miniature Version A
RL	-	Return Loss
VSWR	-	Voltage Standing Wave Ratio
UV	-	Ultraviolet
VBA	-	Visual Basic for Applications
RCS	-	Radar Cross -Section
TE	-	Transverse Electric
TEM	-	Transverse Electromagnetic
GUI	-	Graphical User Interface

LIST OF APPENDICES

APPENDIX	TITLE	PAGE
A	List of Publications and Awards	185
B	Reflection Coefficient and Transmission Coefficient as Function of Return Loss	190
C	The Effects of Metallic Plates on a 920MHz Wire Dipole Antenna	191
D	Monza [®] 3 Tag Chip Datasheet	194
E	Mu Chip Data Sheet	208
F	UHF Gen2 SDK Module	211
G	2.45GHz RFID Reader	214

CHAPTER 1

INTRODUCTION

1.0 Research Background

Printed dipole antennas have been actively studied since they are simple, easy to fabricate, and easy to integrate with the Application Specific Integrated Circuit (ASIC) microchip. It also comes with a wide variety of shapes. However, it is categorized as a low gain antenna where it is fundamentally limited by the size, radiation patterns and the frequency of the operation [1-2]. In addition, the radiation characteristics and input impedance of the dipole antenna will be distorted when the antenna is placed on a metal object [3-5]. This is because, the electromagnetic wave is reflected almost entirely by the metallic surface and a 180° phase shift may be occurred. By nature, the conventional ground planes exhibit the property of phase reversal of the incident currents resulting in destructive interference of both dipole antenna and image currents. The same scenario happens when the dipole tag antenna is attached to a metallic object, the tag cannot be powered up by the field strength emitted by the Radio Frequency Identification (RFID) reader since the metallic object reflects Radio Frequency (RF) wave. The impedance of the tag antenna, resonant frequency of the antenna and radiation efficiency will be changed due to the parasitic capacitance between the tag antenna and the metallic object. To overcome this problem, the antenna must be placed at a quarter-wavelength above the metallic

ground plane, making the antenna bulky at low frequencies [6]. Another way to minimize effects of the parasitic capacitor between the dipole antenna and metallic object and the effect of the reflection of the RF wave by metallic object, a gap between tag antenna and the metallic object is placed and dielectric material between them is added [7].

Thus one way to reduce the size of the antenna, the high-impedance surface (HIS) structure is introduced to act as Perfect Magnetic Conductor (PMC) which does not exist in nature [8-11]. Its structure can be realized by artificially engineered, thus it is called as Artificially Magnetic Conductor (AMC). The AMC or PMC condition is characterized by the frequency or frequencies where the magnitude of the reflection coefficient is +1 and its phase is 0° . It has high surface impedance (Z_s) and it reflects the external electromagnetic waves without the phase reversal. In contrast, the Perfect Electric Conductor (PEC) has a reflectivity of -1 and has electromagnetic waves out of phase with the incident waves. As the metallic plate, the AMC also can be used as a ground plane to redirect the back radiation and provide shielding to the antennas.

This research involves the design and development of a triple-band dipole antenna employing HIS structure called AMC at 0.92GHz, 2.45GHz and 5.8GHz in order to prevent the performance degradation of the dipole antenna caused by a metallic surface and at the same time to increase the gain of the antenna. The approach of designing multi-band antenna and AMC is considered in order to get a versatile antenna and AMC that can operate at multiple frequency bands which have attracted much attention today. All the design simulations are done using Computer Simulation Technology (CST) Microwave Studio software. Based on the optimum simulation results, the designed antenna and AMC are fabricated. The experimental validation of the antenna and tag prototypes with and without the AMC ground plane (GP) is carried out to verify the performance of the designs. Furthermore, the read range of the tag with and without AMC GP and metallic plate attached to them are also recorded to ensure that the developed tag antenna can be used for metallic object identification in RFID applications.

1.1 Research Benefits / Applications

The research benefits/applications are:

- i. The High Impedance Surface structure called Artificial Magnetic Conductor prevents the performance degradation of the antenna and tag caused by a metallic object.
- ii. The AMC offers good radiation efficiency and high gain to the antenna and tag antenna, thus achieving longer reading distance.
- iii. A versatile antenna and AMC can operate at multiple frequency bands.
- iv. The designed tag antenna can be used for metallic and non-metallic object identification.

1.2 Problem Statements

Printed dipole antennas have been actively studied since they are simple, easy to fabricate and integrate with the Application Specific Integrated Circuit (ASIC) microchip. However, these antennas which do not have a ground plane cannot work when the antenna and tag is directly attached to a metallic surface. The electromagnetic wave is reflected almost entirely by the metallic surface and a 180° phase shift occurs. The reflected wave cancels the incident wave of the antenna and tag and this causes changes in the radiation properties of the antenna. The radiation efficiency and gain will be decreased and the resonant frequency will be poor. Microstrip patch [12-13] and Planar Inverted-F Antenna (PIFA) [14-16] antennas are presented as RFID tags for working in metal environments because their designs consist of metallic ground planes. However, their performance as tag antennas is still dependent on the dimensions of the metallic planes close to them [7].

Next, the performance of the RFID is evaluated in terms of reading or communication distance where it is highly dependent on the tag and the RF reader design. Depending on the specific antenna configuration and RF power of the reader, the communication distance may vary. The reader antenna with higher gain and power will be able to read tags from a greater distance. But, in many cases, a UHF reader will be operated at the legal limit, normally a watt of power of the reader [17]. So, the gain of the reader antenna and tag is another important parameter for the reading distance. The range is greatest in the direction of maximum gain, which is fundamentally limited by the size, radiation patterns and frequency of operation. For a small omni-directional dipole antenna, the highest gain is about 2.15dBi which is considered a low gain antenna. Therefore, a new tag antenna needs to be designed and developed which is able to read tags mounted on metallic objects without any performance degradation.

1.3 Research Objectives

The main purpose of this research is to develop a dipole antenna and tag for metallic object identification by employing High Impedance Surface structure called Artificial Magnetic Conductor. By applying the AMC as a ground plane for the dipole antenna, the performance degradation of the antenna and tag caused by the metallic surface can be prevented and the gain of the antenna can be increased. Thus, the research objectives are:

- i. To design and fabricate the triple-band dipole antenna (at 0.92GHz, 2.45GHz and 5.8GHz).
- ii. To design and fabricate the single-band and dual-band AMC-HIS.
- iii. To measure the performance of the antenna and tag with and without the AMC and dipole antenna with AMC ground plane attached with metallic surface.

- iv. To test and validate the tag prototypes by measuring the reading distance of the tag with and without the AMC ground plane and dipole antenna with AMC ground plane attached with metallic surface.

1.4 Scope of Research and Limitations

The scope of the research is as follows:

- i. Review the technique used for multiband printed antenna, the theory and design of Artificial Magnetic Conductor - High Impedance Surface (AMC-HIS) and study the RFID systems and other material related to the research work.
- ii. Design, simulate and optimize a multiband dipole antenna and AMC-HIS at 0.92GHz, 2.45GHz and 5.8GHz.
- iii. Design, simulate and optimize a triple-band dipole antenna with AMC-HIS GP.
- iv. Fabricate the antenna, tag and AMC-HIS.
- v. Measure the antenna and tag properties with and without AMC-HIS structures.
- vi. Validate the designed tag by measuring the reading distance with and without AMC GP attached to a metallic plate.
- vii. Finalize the designs, compile reports and cite regional/international conference and journal papers.

Two factors are identified which impeded the progress of the research. First, the designed triple-band dipole antenna can only be matched at 50Ω impedance in spite of the value difference of tag impedance applied at different RFID frequencies. In this case, for the UHF RFID tag, the Monza® 3 tag chip requires an antenna's impedance of $32 + 216j \Omega$ and the 2.45GHz RFID tag requires antenna's impedance of 60Ω (see Appendix 1 and 2). Second, the passive 5.8GHz MWF RFID systems is required in this research to validate the tag antenna prototypes. However, the passive 5.8GHz RFID system is not available in the market and therefore, it is not possible to test or record the reading distance of the dipole tag antenna working at 5.8GHz.

1.5 Thesis Organization

Chapter 1 presents the research background, research benefits, problem statements, objectives and scope of research and limitations.

Chapter 2 reviews multiband printed antenna technique, Artificial Magnetic Conductor and tag antenna for metallic object identification. The applications of AMC by other researchers are reviewed too. This chapter also presents an overview of the RFID system including its operation, bands and the effect of metallic surface on the dipole antenna and tag performance.

Chapter 3 investigates the wire dipole placed on or near to a metallic surface. Then new designs of triple-band printed dipole antennas used for RFID tag are presented. The dipole antenna with straight and meander structure are designed to operate at three (3) different frequencies (0.92GHz, 2.45GHz and 5.8GHz). The simulation and measurement results of the antenna properties are discussed such as return loss, bandwidth, gain, and radiation pattern at each operating frequency. The

performance of the RFID tags (when the dipole antennas are connected to the ASIC microchip) in terms of reading distance is also presented using the UHF SDK Gen2 Module RFID and Microwave readers.

Chapter 4 gives a detailed explanation of the designed single-band and dual-band AMCs. The AMC characteristics in terms of reflection phase, reflection coefficient magnitude and surface impedance are discussed in this chapter. A detailed analysis of the single-band and dual-band AMCs including the new structure of 0.92GHz zigzag dipole AMC-HIS, and 0.92GHz and 2.45GHz AMC-HIS with rectangular-patch with rectangular and I-shaped slot are elaborated too.

Chapter 5 presents the performance of the designed triple-band straight and meandered dipole antennas with and without the AMC ground plane. It is the main important chapter that aim to demonstrate the simulation and measurement of the dipole antennas with single-band and dual-band AMC-HIS GP. The study parameters include return loss, realized gain, total efficiency, radiation pattern and directivity of the antenna.

Finally, Chapter 6 draws some conclusions including the findings of the research, key contribution and recommendation for future research work.

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